DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

VOL V NO. 22 October 26th 1956 Price: 15 Pf., 5c., 3d

CALL-UP SNAGS

The call-up to the new Wehrmacht has hit serious snags in all parts of West Germany. All over the country municipalities and municipal employees have refused to cooperate in the call-up preparations.

The call-up began in West Germany on October 15th with the posting of big yellow placards calling on all young men born between July and September 1937 to register for military service with their local authorities.

In many large cities, including Munich, Augsburg, Ulm and Pforzheim, registration could not begin because the city councils had refused to open registration centres. Similar refusals were reported from a total of more than one hundred smaller towns and villages.

In the industrial city of Dortmund the registration centre remained shut because the 20 city employees detailed to staff the centre declined to go on duty, declaring they rejected this service for conscientious reasons. The strong Social Democratic organisation of city employees has pledged them its full support.

(For more news of opposition to Adenauer's call-up, turn to page 179.)

E. GERMAN ATOM CENTRE – FIRST PICTURES

First pictures of the first atomic research centre in the German Democratic Republic, now in course of construction. The picture on the right shows the skeleton of the building where the reactor will be housed, and the picture on the left shows the three-storey laboratories.

With the aid of blue-prints and equipment from the Soviet Union the German Democratic Republic plans to open a 100,000 kilowatt atomic electric power station by 1960.

ADENAUER RE-SHUFFLES CABINET

The Mixture as Before

West German Chancellor Adenauer re-shuffled his cabinet on October 16th, kicking out Defence Minister Theodor Blank, who has proved incapable of overcoming popular opposition to the new West German Wehrmacht, and replacing him by Franz-Josef Strauss.

The new defence minister has been an outspoken advocate of a streamlined professional Wehrmacht, armed with atomic weapons.

Another result of the re-shuffle was the installation as Minister of Justice of Hans-Joachim von Merkatz, leader of the extreme right-wing German Party. During the war Merkatz was director of the "Latin-American Institute" in Berlin, which trained nazi agents for their jobs in Spanish-speaking countries.

New Cabinet — Full List

Here is a full list of the new West German Cabinet, formed on October 16th:

Chancellor: Konrad Adenauer, Christian Democrat. The nazis removed him from his office as Lord Mayor of Cologne, but paid him full pension throughout nazi period.

Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Cooperation: Franz Bluecher, Free People's Party. Banker by profession. Quote: "Every one of us must give his full moral support to German soldierliness, which is nothing more nor less than a moral conception" (German Soldiers' Calender 1955, p. 128).

Minister of Foreign Affairs: Heinrich von Brentano, Christian Democrat. Lawyer who practised in nazi courts throughout Hitler period.

Minister of the Interior: Gerhard Schroeder, Christian Democrat. Joined SA, nazi storm troops, in 1933. Was legal adviser to nazi finance minister Hjalmar Schacht.

Minister of Finance: Fritz Schaeffer, Christian Democrat. Removed from local government office late in 1945 by US Military Government which declared "Schaeffer must be regarded as nazi collaborator".

Minister for Economics: Ludwig Erhard, Christian Democrat. Prominent economic research expert during nazi period.

Minister of Defence: Franz-Josef Strauss, Christian Democrat. Former Wehrmacht officer. Quote: "The Prussian officer is the ideal type of German" (June 29th 1952).

Minister of Agriculture: Heinrich Luebke, Christian Democrat. Imprisoned by nazis for short period, later worked as official of nazi city administration in Berlin.

Minister of Labour: Anton Storch, Christian Democrat. Former official of Christian Trade Unions.

Minister of Transport: Hans-Christoph Seebohm, German Party. Quote: "European culture can only be found where Germans live" (August 9th 1952).

Minister of Housing: Victor-Emanuel Preusker, Free People's Party. Joined Hitler's black-uniformed SS in 1933 and became instructor on "radical problems". Received special diploma in 1939 for "freeing German economy from the Jewish yoke".

Minister for All-German Affairs: Jakob Kaiser, Christian Democrat. Former official of Christian Trade Unions.

Minister of Justice and Upper House Affairs: Hans-Joachim von Merkatz, German Party. Wartime head of nazi intelligence organisation "Latin-American Institute" in Berlin. Quote: "We have gambled with the inheritance of our grandfathers. Now we must win back what Bismarck and others won" (February 24th 1955).

Minister of Expellees: Theodor Oberlaender, Christian Democrat. Joined nazi party in 1933, rose to rank of major in SA storm troops. In 1939 was attached to staff of Gauleiter of East Prussia.

Minister for Atomic Affairs and Posts: Siegfried Balke, Christian Democrat. Prominent chemical industrialist, connected with IG Farben group.

Minister for Family Questions: Franz-Josef Wuermeling, Christian Democrat. Quote: "As Catholic Christians we know that we are better people than the heathens who surround us" (May 1954).

SS Soft-Pedalled After World Protests

World-wide protests against the re-integration of SS officers in the new West German Wehrmacht have forced leading West German politicians to make conciliatory statements on the subject.

West German Chancellor Adenauer told a press conference in West Berlin on October 12th that if he had known of the decision to publish the fact that former SS officers could now be re-employed, he would have forbidden publication. He promised that the subject would be discussed in the near future by the cabinet.

Speaking in West Germany on October 14th, Dr Eugen Gerstenmaier, Chairman of the West German Parliament, stated that he personally was opposed to the re-integration of SS officers "even in the case of those officers who have reformed".

•

The American news agency Associated Press reported from Bonn on October 10th that 1310 former SS officers had so far applied for posts in the new Wehrmacht. 33 had so far been accepted, and the cases of the other applicants are still under review.

"Armed to the Teeth" Says Adenauer

West Germany must be "armed to the teeth" before it negotiates with the Soviet Union on Germany unity, West German Chancellor Adenauer stated in West Berlin on October 12th.

"I firmly believe that re-unification will come, but we must be armed to the teeth if we want to speak to the Russians in a friendly way", Adenauer told a meeting of the Evangelical Circle of the West German Christian Democratic Party. He condemned recent attempts made by various West German politicians to establish direct contact with political circles in the German Democratic Republic. "Such talks just give the East Germans the impression that we are getting soft" he said.

An official spokesman of the West German Social Democratic Party described Adenauer's "armed to the teeth" speech as a stupid provocation.

TROOPS OUT AGAINST CALL-UP OPPONENTS

More than 3000 heavily armed troops of the West German Frontier Force held wide-spread manoeuvres in Lower Saxony in the second week in October. Their commanding officer, General Heinrich Mueller, told the press that the object of the manoeuvre had been to practice tactics to be used in suppressing disturbances arising from the introduction of conscription to the West German Army.

Liberal newspapers in many parts of West Germany expressed their unrest at these war exercises, which were aimed at creating a civil war atmosphere. We reproduce on this page a cartoon and a leading article on the subject from the "Frankfurter Rundschau" of October 11th.

* * *

What is the situation in the German Federal Republic? For years we have heard worried democrats voicing their fear that inner-political developments along the lines of Adenauer's military ideas will automatically lead to the civil war situation of 1932—1933.

So say the democratic, non-communist pessimists. For years now the constructive, optimistic oppositionists have emphasised that this danger must certainly be taken seriously, but that the basic conditions of 1932 do not now exist.

We must today admit that the optimists were mistaken. We were mistaken in the assumption that those in command of the Federal Frontier Defence Force — including the Federal Minister of the Interior and the Chancellor — have the same peaceful outlook as the working and tax-paying people.

How could it otherwise have been possible for a General Heinrich Mueller, commanding officer of Commando North of the Federal Frontier Defence Force, to organise a purely civil war manoeuvre with 3,300 frontier troops in the Gifhorn area?

Proceeding on the assumption that "the controversy over conscription has led to a certain amount of excitement amongst the population" (!), this political dilettante adds the further explanation that "owing to lack of response from the industrial workers the groups in revolt have decided to retreat in order to continue the revolt in the medium and small towns".

This cartoon from the West German "Frankfurter Rundschau" shows West German frontier troops shooting at targets with the pictures of call-up opponents Erich Ollenhauer, Social Democratic leader, Thomas Dehler, Free Democratic leader, and a third target marked "conscientious objector".

Quite apart from the peculiar supposition that the danger is to be sought in the medium and small towns, there is good cause for anxiety when a General and his superiors have nothing better to do than provocatively and stupidly to play at civil war. And we pay out good money for this!

Moreover, the controversy over conscription is perfectly legal. It is being fought out in all countries today; even Stevenson, American presidential candidate, spoke recently against conscription. But where in the whole world would any national army or frontier defence force carry out civil war manoeuvres on that account? This could only happen in Germany. But here too, the whole world is convinced, the question will be decided in parliament and at the ballot box.

Speaking of parliament, we are of the opinion that parliament must take on the task of forbidding actions such as those of Herr Mueller, not only through protests but through uncompromising demands for changes in command, to ensure that the Federal Frontier Forces fulfil their task of protecting the frontier, so that peaceful German citizens can go about their work in peace. And no other task. . . .

Frankfurter Rundschau,
October 11th 1956

YOUTH HELP MAKE AMENDS

Young Berliners will help to clean up and restore the central Jewish cemetery in East Berlin, following an appeal launched by Dean Heinrich Grueber, liaison official between the Evangelical Church and the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

Dean Grueber, who himself spent many years in a nazi concentration camp, issued the following appeal to the young people of Berlin:

"When our innocent co-citizens were vilified and plundered (on November 9th 1938) the mass of the German people stood aside, silent and with their hands folded. This was the beginning of the calvary of the Jewish people and all victims of the Nuremberg Laws. The flourishing Jewish community, which had given our city so many good citizens, artists and scientists, was almost entirely exterminated. There remained behind a cemetery with 113,500 graves which remained untended, since the relatives of those buried there were dead, murdered, or had emigrated.

"I appeal to the young people of Berlin to come together and to restore the cemetery of the Jewish Community so that we need not feel ashamed of it. The young people will thus help to lift a little part of the great guilt which the German people have imposed upon themselves."

FIGURES SHOW RISING STANDARDS

Do Statistics Lie?

In the adjoining columns we present a selection of statistics showing developments in various fields in the German Democratic Republic in the past few years. The figures are taken from two new volumes of facts and figures which have recently been published in Berlin (Full titles of the books are given at the foot of the column).

There is a saying that statistics can be made to prove anything, so a word of warning with regard to these statistics may not be out of place. A cursory glance will show, for instance, that average wages rose by almost 50 % between 1950 and 1955; prices fell by more than 30 % in the same period; and the consumption of important foodstuffs was more than doubled.

The figures are correct: wages have risen, prices have fallen, consumption has increased. As a result everybody in Democratic Germany is today living much better than in 1950. But it would be dangerous and misleading to conclude that as a result everybody is now living in luxury, as a superficial reading of the statistics might lead one to suppose.

The explanation is quite simple. In 1950, average living standards in Democratic Germany were still disastrously low: consumption of meat, fat and eggs was only about half the pre-war level. At the same time prices for many articles were still enormously high, and wages lagged far behind.

A careful reading of the statistics shows that the slack has in the meantime been taken up, and the war damage has been made good. The people of Democratic Germany, relying on their own efforts, have got things running again: now they can go forward to provide a really good life for all.

The statistics on this page were extracted from:

"Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1955", VEB Deutscher Zentralverlag, Berlin 1956. Price 14.10 marks.

"Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1956", Verlag Die Wirtschaft, Berlin 1956. Price 15 marks.

Increase in Wages

Monthly average wages of workers:

1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
262 marks	296	313	338	373	383

Price Index

1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
100	83.4	76.7	73.2	68.6	67.8

Increase in Food and Consumer Goods Supply

(1950 = 100)

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Meat	129	182	209	231	221
Fish	172	142	171	211	228
Fats	146	164	170	199	211
Eggs	172	261	275	259	280
Shoes	131	165	214	243	276
Bicycles	155	209	631	561	553
Cameras	159	225	394	858	769

Percentage of Nationally Owned and Private Industry

	1950	1955
Nationally owned	76.5	85.3
Privately owned	23.5	14.7

Gross Industrial Production in Million Marks

	1950	1955	% Increase
Heavy industry	7,964	14,238	178
Metallurgy	5,610	12,049	214
Light industry	6,305	10,483	166
Food industries	3,456	7,470	216
Total	23,337	44,241	189

Increase in Foreign Trade

(1950 = 100)

1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
150.8	172.6	222.7	271.3	279.9

Child Care

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Infants' homes	86	99	129	152	172	191
Places in infants' homes (in 1000's)	3.9	4.4	5.8	6.8	7.9	9.2
Creches	194	312	477	873	1312	1586
Places in creches (in 1000's)	4.7	8.2	14.0	26.0	40.6	50.2
Nursery schools	5507	5809	6241	7179	8794	9913
Places in nursery schools (in 1000's)	•	•	203.1	247.4	298.6	339.6

CAN A CAPITALIST RUN A SOCIALIST FACTORY?

By Frederick Ford

Everyone knows that the German Democratic Republic is a basically socialist state. The mines and heavy industry have been nationalised, and an overwhelming proportion of production comes from these socialist factories.

It is not so well known, however, that there are still many hundreds of capitalist factories in Democratic Germany, many of them employing hundreds of workers. Official statistics show that in 1955 these factories turned out the not unimportant share of nearly 15% of the total industrial production of the Republic. Not only this, but the production of privately owned factories had grown by one-fifth between 1950 and 1955.

This situation has arisen from the fact that there has been no all-inclusive socialisation law in the German Democratic Republic as there was in most other socialist countries. Heavy industry and mining were nationalised after a plebiscite in 1946 which showed an overwhelming majority of the population in favour of such a measure, but other private factories, insofar as they were not owned by war criminals or nazi activists, have remained untouched.

This co-existence between private and socialised industry has led to a number of problems, of course, since it is not always easy to find the right niche for privately-owned industry in a planned socialist economy.

The problem has steadily become more pressing, and the Government had to find a solution. On the one hand measures could have been taken to forge ahead with a policy of full socialisation. This idea has been rejected because experience has proved that, in the transitional period at least, many of the private enterprises play a very useful and positive role in the economy: in fact it has been officially stated that without the help of private industry it would be almost impossible to reach the production targets set for the Second Five Year Plan ending in 1960. In addition it is desirable to show the world, and in particular West Germany, that once the big monopolies have been deprived of their grip there is a real possibility for small privately-owned industries to play a part.

On the other hand, the government could have let the situation remain as it is. This appeared undesirable, since under a system which is primarily socialist it becomes increasingly difficult for private industry to operate in the traditional manner. There is not only the difficulty of incorporating private industry in over-all economic planning, but all sorts of other difficulties: private enterprises find it difficult to raise the capital they need for modernising their works, the workers in these factories see no incentive for using their initiative and increasing output for the benefit of the private owner, and so on.

Under these circumstances, the Government of the German Democratic Republic, early this year, decided to try out a completely new plan: to propose to the private industrialists that they enter into partnership with the state.

The German Democratic Republic is the first state, with the exception of China, to try a scheme of this sort. There are, however, many important differences of detail between the Chinese plan and the plan adopted in the German Democratic Republic.

The plan appears to be rather complicated, but boiled down to essentials it is as follows: any private industrialist who so desires may apply for state participation in his factory. His private factory is then converted into a sort of limited company in which the state holds a proportion of the shares: 50% is the figure generally aimed at, but many of the contracts already concluded provide for a 30% or 40% state holding.

The factory owner remains the factory owner, runs the factory as he has already done, and takes his share of the profits in accordance with his share holding as he has always done. At the same time, however, he is director of a half-socialist enterprise, and for this he receives emoluments from the state at approximately the same rate as he would if he were in fact the factory director of a wholly socialist enterprise.

What advantages does the new scheme bring him? For one thing he receives his raw materials from natural resources, from imports, and from socialised industry with the same priority as fully socialised factories. For another, the capital provided by the state for its share in the factory is available for the modernisation and possibly the extension of his plant. And for yet another, the workers in his plant, employed now in a part-socialist factory, have the incentive to increase production and to develop their initiative to the full. This last factor is of considerable importance, since the experience of the past few years has shown that with a few exceptions productivity is considerably higher in socialised factories than in privately owned enterprises.

What advantages does it bring to the workers? With the increase in productivity and modernisation in the factory their wages, which at present lag behind those in socialised industry in the great majority of cases, will gradually increase as productivity rises. At the same time social services in most of the private factories will in most cases be considerably improved.

And what advantages will it bring to the state and the economy as a whole? It will be much easier to incorporate these new "half-socialist" factories in the general plan, and to swing production into branches most urgently needed. At the same time there is some guarantee of efficient management — and the provision of efficient managers is still one of the big problems facing the development of socialism — since the private owner-manager has an obvious personal interest and considerable experience in running his factory well.

It is still too early to tell how the new plan will work out in practice, since the first steps were only taken a few months ago. But already, in the first six months of the scheme, 624 private industrialists in the German Democratic Republic have applied for state participation in their factories. 300 of the applications have already been investigated and decided upon: 255 of them were approved and 45 were rejected.

As a result, today more than ten percent of the private industrialists are taking part in the new scheme. Well over 200 capitalists are seeing what it is like to be manager of a half-socialist factory.

Can a capitalist run a half-socialist factory? The experience of the next few months and years will show.

MAYOR LOWTON HAS A LOOK

"We Saw What We Wanted" Says Walthamstow Man

A number of mayors and aldermen from Britain recently visited the German Democratic Republic to attend the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the town of Cottbus. Among the visitors were the Mayor and Mayoress of Walthamstow. Here are some impressions of their visit, reproduced from the Walthamstow Guardian of September 7th:

"A people almost pathetically anxious to be understanding and understood, social improvements that are considerable by any standard" and "an atmosphere of pride in achievement and a desire for peace".

These are the impressions of East Germany brought back to Walthamstow by the Mayor and Mayoress (Alderman and Mrs. G. R. Lowton) last week.

The Russians? "We were told that for all they interfere with the Germans they might just as well not be there. It is a token occupation. We saw fewer Russian soldiers about than we see policemen in Walthamstow", said Alderman Lowton.

But how true an impression is this? Was this another case of Western visitors being taken on a specially pre-arranged tour, being shown only what their hosts wanted them to see and being steered away from anything they could criticise?

"No," say Mr. and Mrs. Lowton, "We went there with a critical mind, but we were very well received. They seemed anxious to show us what they have achieved. We were allowed to see just what we wanted. My wife and I are both hard-headed people, not easily taken in."

"Of course six days is not enough. You would have to spend months or years there before you really knew what people thought. But we certainly didn't get the impression of people who are oppressed."

The six-day visit was to help celebrate the 800th anniversary ef the county town of Cottbus, 70 miles from Berlin in the Russian zone. Chairman of the German country authority is Herr Brasch — he spent some years in Britain as a refugee from the Nazis. He formed an admiration for many things British and a friendship with Mr. Will Collins, M. P.

Through the M. P., then, he invited a number of British civic leaders to the anniversary of his town which began on Sunday August 19th.

At the main conference, Ald. Lowton says, the hosts were asked many blunt questions about their country — and they answered them frankly.

This was no back-slapping get-together, but a down-to-earth exchange of views and criticisms. Some of the most pointed questions dealt with the East German electoral system.

"I think I now have a much fairer ieda of their elections"; said Ald. Lowton. "But I still think that our way is best."

What most impressed Mrs. Lowton was the efforts made to cater for the youngsters. From a magnificent rest home for expectant mothers, to nurseries, day and boarding, for working mothers, kindergartens, schools and colleges — she found a well-integrated, constant service available for the young people.

They also saw schools for handicapped children, old people's homes, modern clinics for spezialist diagnosis, modern bright and clean housing development.

And although each worker paid ten per cent of his income towards these social services, most were paid for from the profits of the state-owned factories of Cottbus — an important glass and textile centre.

And emphasising again that their stay had been brief, and perhaps their impressions could not be conclusive, they said that the occasion on which they got the best impression of the atmospere in the country was when they paid a visit to a large market place.

"The women looked smart and well-dressed, their hair was waved. We all remarked on that. But more important they seemed quite happy and carefree. They are placid people and seemed anxious that peace should continue."

SPORTSMEN OUTPACE POLITICIANS

Sportsmen from both halves of Germany have completely outdistanced the politicians by getting together for friendly discussions and agreeing on a joint East-West team to represent the whole of Germany at the Olympic Games in Melbourne. To date most responsible politicians in West Germany have flatly refused to hold any sort of discussions with their opposite numbers in East Germany.

On October 15th the representatives of the National Olympic Committees of the (West) German Federal Republic and the (East) German Democratic Republic issued a cordial joint communique in Cologne announcing their full agreement on the composition of the all-German teams for Melbourne. Selection for the teams was made solely on a basis of performance. About one quarter of the all-German team is composed of sportsmen from the German Democratic Republic.

The all-German team will be led by Gerhard Stock from West Germany, and his deputy will be Guenter Heinze from East Germany.

ONE THOUSAND FOREIGN STUDENTS

More than one thousand foreign students from over 20 different countries are now studying at universities and technical high schools in the German Democratic Republic, it was announced at the beginning of the new university year in September. For the first time 60 students from the Soviet Union are now studying here.

Over one thousand students from the Democratic Republic are at present studying in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The foreign students form only a small proportion of the total of 90,000 students at all seats of higher education in the German Democratic Republic — six universities and 40 technical high schools, art and music academies, etc. An analysis of the social background of the German students shows that 60% come from the families of workers and peasants; 15% each from the families of intellectuals and office workers, and the remainder from the families of craftsmen and businessmen.

"WE CAN'T IGNORE EAST GERMANY" — Conservative M. P.

It is folly for Britain to ignore the existence of East Germany, stated Montgomery Hyde, Conservative M. P. for North Belfast, after a visit to the German Democratic Republic.

In an article in the "New Statesman and Nation" on October 6th Mr Hyde, former British representative on the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, urged the British Government to conclude a commercial treaty with the German Democratic Republic without delay.

Here are some of the main points from Mr Hyde's article:

"Twice a year, in March and September, travel restrictions are relaxed by the East German authorities to enable foreigners to visit the trade fair in Leipzig . . . Recently I took advantage of this opportunity.

"While the emphasis at the Spring Fair is on capital goods, industrial and technical machinery, the Autumn Fair in Leipzig is traditionally devoted to consumer goods. This year about 200,000 visitors from 67 countries inspected a wide range . . . . With the exception of a few English books, whose display I thought much inferior to those of French and other western European publishing houses, there were no British products to be seen. One East German woman, whom I rightly guessed to be wearing a costume of Donegal tweed, told me how pleased she was to have got hold of something 'really Irish'. She would gladly have worn a costume of English or Scotch cloth, she said, if she could have bought one anywhere in the DDR (German Democratic Republic) but she could not. Why should this be?

"Shortly before parliament rose for the summer recess, Mr Thorneycroft, the President of the Board of Trade, in a written reply to a parliamentary question, stated that his department would not be sending representatives to the Leipzig Fair, either as an official delegation or as observers. To have done so, it appears, might somehow have implied a degree of political recognition of the DDR, which the United Kingdom, France and the United States are jointly agreed should not be recognised as a government.

"Yet this did not prevent France from making use of the facilities at Leipzig to conclude trade deals through her Commercial Counsellor at Bonn, who is a frequent visitor to the Soviet Zone. The only official British visitors, on the other hand, were some officers of our military mission to the Soviet Occupation Forces, who somewhat incongruously turned up in uniform. This seemed to me hardly the correct dress for a trade fair, though I daresay it would not have been out of place at an international horse show.

"In his speech declaring the Fair open, Herr Rau, the East German Minister of Commerce, confessed himself puzzled by the official British attitude. 'The British are one of the oldest and most experienced trading nations', he said. 'But for some reason or other, they have not fully studied the new factors and situation in international trade, and especially the factors arising from the existence of the Socialist world market.' In Britain and other capitalist countries, the Minister remarked, 'one tends to overlook the fact that in countries with a planned economy the volume of trade with each country is included in the plan and that the foreign trade organisations adapt themselves accordingly'.

"According to Herr Rau, the DDR is anxious to increase its trading relations with the capitalist countries. I believe this desire to be genuine. . . .

"Herr Rau would like to conclude a commercial treaty with the U. K. Indeed he makes no bones about this. Hitherto the Board of Trade would seem to have been restrained by Foreign Office qualms on the subject of recognition, a factor of which Herr Rau is well aware. Recently there have been a few encouraging signs that this attitude is changing. Mr Thorneycroft and his advisers appear somewhat less disinclined than they were to open negotiations with Herr Rau and his ministry in East Berlin. They may be realising that East Germans could do with our cars, our woolens and linens and our agricultural machinery, while we would be better off with their steel, their chemical fertilisers and their optical goods, to quote just a few examples. . . .

"Anyhow, whatever the Foreign Office pundits may think, surely it is folly to go on officially ignoring the existence of 18 million East Germans, who inhabit over 107,000 square miles of fertile and industrially productive German territory? By all means let us trade with them to our mutual advantage and by so doing get to understand and know each other better . . . . In my opinion, we should conclude a commercial treaty with the DDR as soon as possible and send an official trade commissioner to East Berlin."

WEST GERMAN THREATENS SYRIA

West Germany has threatened Syria with the breach of diplomatic relations, following the Syrian decision to allow the establishment of a consulate of the German Democratic Republic in Damascus.

Immediately after the Syrian announcement on October 9th, the West German Government called home its ambassador to Syria, and stated that it would regard Syrian recognition of the German Democratic Republic as "an unfriendly act".

The Syrian Government replied that the question as to which governments it chose to recognise was solely a matter for Syria itself to decide.

Trade Agreement With India

India and the German Democratic Republic signed a three-year trade agreement in New Delhi on October 8th. Democratic Germany will supply manufactured goods, including machines, chemicals, and optical instruments, and India will supply mainly raw materials, foodstuffs and tobacco.

Fisk Singers in Democratic Germany

The Fisk Jubilee Singers, famed American Negro choir, won great public applause at a one-night stand in Leipzig, East Germany, early in October.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

On another page we give the news that East and West Germany have at last been able to decide on one thing — they are sending a joint all-German team to Melbourne for the Olympic Games. I don't think I need stress the point that it might be a good thing if some political leaders could show the same sort of good sense as has been shown here by the runners, wrestlers and weight lifters. Incidentally I am assured that it is purely coincidental that the two German entrants for the shooting events in Melbourne come from West Germany. No political motives should be attached to this choice: they simply happen to be the best marksmen available.

Headaches

But it should not be supposed that this very gratifying result of round-table discussions came about without a lot of headaches, and quite a lot of readiness for compromise on both sides. When the discussions on the sending of a joint team began last year there was at first a tendency on the part of some of the West German sports officials to treat the German Democratic Republic as a sort of temporarily disaffiliated part of the West German state, which would be graciously allowed to send a few athletes along with the West German team.

They were politely disabused of their misconception, and since then the negotiations have been conducted on both sides with full recognition of the sovereign rights of the other partner.

National Anthem

Some of the minor points which had to be settled would be almost comic if they had not underlined the tragic way in which the two German states have grown apart from each other. There was, for instance, the burning question of the national anthem. At the Olympic Games it is the old-established practice to play the national anthem of the winner of each separate event: since both German states have their own national anthems, this problem would loom large if any of the German athletes should win.

The first compromise proposal was that the band should be asked to play the national anthem of that part of Germany from which the winner came. When I first heard of this compromise I had visions of the Australian bandmaster frantically thumbing through the lists trying to find out whether Herr Schmidt, the man who had just won the race, was East-Schmidt, in which case he should play "Arisen from the Ruins", the anthem of the German Democratic Republic, or whether he was West-Schmidt, in which case he would have to play "Deutschland über Alles", the West German anthem. (If I know anything about the average Australian bandmaster, I have a feeling that he would have played the East German anthem "by mistake", rather than blaring out the rather too-familiar strains of "Germany Above All": but that is only by the way.)

Another and apparently insoluble problem connected with the national anthem would have been what to do in the case of a mixed victory: both the men's and the women's track relay teams are composed of runners from both East and West: a pot-pourri would obviously not have met the case.

Compromise

As in many other cases under dispute, the way out was found in a compromise. The National Olympic Committees of both East and West Germany decided that national anthems were out of the question: if a German athlete wins an event, the bandmaster will play one of Beethoven's most famous compositions — "Freude, schöner Götterfunken" from the last movement of his Ninth Symphony.

This tune is perhaps best known in English-speaking countries as the melody to the hymn "Once to Every Man and Nation" by James Russell Lowell.

The words of the hymn are taken from Lowell's poem "The Present Crisis", written at a time when the United States were split into two states, the Union and the Confederacy.

James Russel Lowell chose the side of progress — the North — against the side of reaction — the South: and the first verse of his poem runs:

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide, In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side."

I don't suppose for a moment that the athletes who chose this piece of music as their substitute "national anthem" knew what words were attached to the tune in English: but if a German athlete should win in any event, and the tune is played, then I expect quite a lot of Australian spectators who know the hymn will see the significance.

Little Rugger

Since most of this notebook has been occupied, indirectly at least, with the question of sports, let us stay with the subject. Leafing through the extremely interesting Statistical Yearbook of the German Democratic Republic, which has just been published for the first time, I discovered the fact, which will probably sadden some readers, that rugby football is by far and away the least popular of all the varieties of sport generally practised here.

The Statistical Year Book shows that a total of well over one million people are active members of the various sports associations: only 271 of the million play rugger. For some reason or other rugby has never been popular in Germany: when the West German TV service recently broadcast a rugby match, the commentator spent most of his time trying to explain the rules to viewers, and making a fairly extensive hash of it in the process. But I like to think of the 271 rugger enthusiasts of the German Democratic Republic ruggedly refusing to be put off their game by a fairly unanimous lack of interest. And they are even managing to win a few, a very few, youthful adherents. The Statistical Yearbook reveals that twelve brave lads aged between 10 and 14 also play rugger. Since a rugby team is fifteen strong, however, the question that worries me is who they can possibly find to play against.

Free Book

For readers who are keen on sport, I am glad to announce that a 70-page booklet on the organisation and development of sports in the German Democratic Republic has now appeared in English. The booklet, written by well-known British sports writer J. Armour-Milne, gives an all-round picture of the way sporting life is organised, and includes interesting details of best athletic performances as a basis for comparison with other countries.

We shall be glad to send a free copy of the booklet to any reader interested, but write in soon, since supplies are strictly limited.

Edited and published fortnightly by John Peet Democratic German Report, Friedrichstrasse 167/III Berlin W 8, Telephone 22 29 68. Printed in Germany by (36). Veröffentlicht unter Lizenz-Nr. 694 beim Presseamt des Ministerpräsidenten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik